

Shipping:

Messrs. KELLY & WALSH, Messrs. LANE
CRAWFORD & Co., Hongkong; and Messrs.
KELLY & WALSH, Shanghai.

Do. (Wet bulb) 9 A.M.	75
Do. Do. 1 P.M.	79
Do. Do. 4 P.M.	90
Do. Maximum ...	90
Do. Minimum over night	82

HONGKONG, September 17, 1892.

ON SINGING.

"The art of singing has, during the last half century, gradually grown to what it is now, at the end of the 19th century, it is almost lost sight of, and singing can hardly be called an art at all. The human voice, with its infinity of timbre and modulation, is no longer cultivated with a view of developing the resources of light and shade, passion and pathos, but has followed the march of the instrumentalists in their struggle for 'noise, more noise.' It must be borne in mind that when most of the songs that are worth singing were written, the accompaniment was played on the harpsichord, which, for power, bears about the same ratio to a modern iron-bound grand as a tin trumpet to a trombone. Even the orchestra of the good old times, when the human voice was the first instrument, and all others subordinate, must have been much lighter than the average modern orchestra, with its braying brass; for many accompaniments are written for harpsichord orchestra, and a harpsichord is a very feeble instrument, with the exception of about three whistles, under the hands of their great conductors, can be made to whisper, might have been seen, but would certainly not be heard. Wagner and Verdi are principally responsible for the resources of singing as an art. Their music treats the human voice as a trombone of flesh and blood, and requires a perpetual tension of the vocal cords to their fullest stretch in the struggle to compete with orchestration in which brass plays a conspicuous part. The vocal cords resemble elastic, which, if constantly pulled to its utmost stretch, soon loses its power of contracting again, and becomes flabby. What is known as mezzo-soprano singing, in which the great singers of old required a perfect springiness of the vocal cords, so that a note sung pianissimo may have purity and sweetness of timbre. The modern singer cannot attempt to sing mezzo-voice; unless the vocal cords are strained to their full power, the sound that issues from the throat is a hoarse, shaky whisper. From the disinclination to study as much as is necessary to acquire a complete mastery over the soft timbre of the voice, and from the fact that nearly as much money can be obtained by having as by singing, the modern singer has been trained the uneducated public to expect nothing but shouting. There still remain a few, such as Patey, Lloyd, and Santley, who preserve the brightness of the old school and delicacy of phrasing of the old school of artists, but their reputation comes from long ago, and the public know that they are good, and applaud accordingly like sheep. The effect of the modern shouting, however, was to make the singer's work to Australia. The Australian expected a shout that would out-shout what they had heard before, and get perfect parity of tone, and the highest finish of phrasing, and were disappointed, and Santley's view was that the modern singer is thus, leaving out of consideration the loss to art, the poor singers of the present day are struggling against a wave that must overwhelm them, for there is a limit to the power obtainable, even for a year or two, by the human voice, whereas there is no limit to the extending of the power of instruments; and the singers, like the poor folk of the fable, will only burst themselves in trying to emulate the orchestral buff.

Another want of foresight by the modern singer, is in ignoring the fact that the strain on the throat by constant shouting, will shorten their careers immensely, and we shall have no more of the most ten, years will be the singing life of the modern singer. That perpetual noise was not the idea held of the beautiful by the greatest masters, is shown by their notes. It is hard to find among the works of the greatest writers, such as Schumann, Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, &c., except when some special effect is gained thereby, an instance of a high fortissimo note at the end of a phrase, or for the purpose of showing off the singer's voice. To see the importance these great men attached to the effect obtainable by the use of the mezzo-voice in singing, one has only to look through their works. Beethoven's 'Adelaide,' Schubert's 'Erlking,' and 'Wanderer,' almost all Schumann's songs, with the exception of 'Widmung' which ends with a burst of passion; 'It is enough' of Mendelssohn, and 'Auf Flügeln des Gesanges' by the same composer, and other instances of the greatest efforts of the greatest minds, all pianissimo. Compare these with the modern school of writing, where, in nine cases out of ten, totally irrelevant to the meaning of the words, or the completion of the idea of the great song, there is a high note, with two or three marks over it, occupies the greater portion of the penultimate bar. Not only has art lost by the inevitable and unparadiseable yell at the end, but the delicacy of finish and meaning of phrasing is a thing of the past, owing to the perpetual straining after noise by one who puts himself to the task to make more or less noise, and if that alone is the desideratum of the old ladies who cry fish at Billingsgate would, I fancy, suit the most potent prima donna of the Victorian stage. The use of the mezzosoprano and mezzo-voice in modern style is scarcely perceptible, and the swell from soft to loud obtainable by the trained human voice as by no other instrument, is only to be heard on the stage, and from one of the remaining artists of the old school. When a song is begun and carried through with the full power of the lungs, there is evidently no scope for the fine gradations of phrasing that lead gradually to the climax, and the result is a song sung in the modern style is exactly the same as a picture, painted only with raw colours, like some of the starling penny prints one sees about the streets. A singer should always remember that he is only the exponent of the thoughts of another mind, generally greater than his own. He should look upon himself only as the pane of glass that covers some masterpiece of old painting, and through that pane people are enabled to see his beauty. The more pure and transparent the glass which covers the picture is, the better, naturally, the work behind is seen. Any opaqueness or flaws in the glass, which leaves its presence to be noticeable, only detract from the beauty of the picture. In the same manner, any undue protrusion of the singer's personality, either in forcing his voice on the ears of his audience, to the detriment of the intention of the composer, or by thinking of extremes of gesture, can only detract from and destroy the effect of the composition as a work of art, however much applause may be gained thereby from an uneducated and tasteless public. The accompaniment should always be subordinate to the singer, and however loud the instrument, or instruments that accompany may be at their full power, they should always be capable of being reduced, so that a whisper of the voice can be distinctly heard. The voice also should never predominate unduly over the accompaniment, and if we imagine the average modern singer to be reduced to singing to the accompaniment of a harpsichord we can well suppose that the voice

would be tedious. A suit of velvet of power is undoubtedly requisite for a public singer, but the superiority of a pure style, and complete mastery of the voice, over mere volume of sound, is shown by the career of Edward Lloyd, who, with his voice, has for many years held and kept the position of the first tenor in England, being without a rival on the concert platform.—'H' in the Pioneer Mail.

'HE WANTED TO SEE THE WHEELS GO ROUND.'

There was once a bright boy who loved to examine the internal structure of his uncle's watch in order, as he remarked, that he might 'see the wheels go round.' Smart and inquiring fellow! Some day he may make a watch that will keep better than those which are made to sell at a profit with difficulty keep up with the days of the week, to say nothing of hours and minutes.

But for a hundred persons who know how a watch is constructed how many know what kind of 'wheels' are inside their own bodies? Not one. Now the heart is the human pendulum. Sometimes it beats too fast and sometimes too slow. What makes it not in that way? Can you tell? Probably not. When it is irregularly beating you, you see 'a doctor.' Way down you study up the subject yourself, and learn as much about it as any locomotive driver is bound to know about his engine? Can't? Yes you can.

Look here, for instance. A man writes thus: 'My heart would throb and beat as it might jump out of its place.' The 'wheels' were going much too rapidly within his body. He was 'gaining time' at a fearful rate, and when that happens a man nears his death faster than it is pleasant to think of. What was wrong with the machinery? Suppose we look into it and try to find out.

He says that up to April, 1890, he had always enjoyed good health. At that date he had a great cold, or influenza, or 'grip.' This left him in a weak condition, and it commonly does. One morning, in the following July, he found a great patch of eruption, resembling ringworm, covering his thighs, which gradually spread until it covered the abdomen and all the lower part of his body. After this his appetite failed, and the natural and necessary act of eating caused him great pain in the chest. He adds: 'The wind rolled around my chest and drove all the blood into my head.'

No doubt he describes the sensation correctly, but the fact probably was that there was too little blood in his head rather than too much, and the wind rolled around his chest and drove all the blood into his head. This system was underfed through the disease, and his body machine was running too fast from very weakness, not from surplus power; just as a body and machine about the size of the one he describes, would run too fast from lack of fuel. I would go into a great deal, but I fear I should fall down in a fit. He says, 'and the pain and dizziness were so bad that I feared I should fall down in a fit. I found my hands and feet were cold and clammy, and at other times they were hot as if I were burning. For over three months I continued like this, getting weaker every day.'

Certainly, what else could be expected? 'Feeling now very anxious,' he proceeds to say, 'I saw a doctor, who gave me medicine and embrocations, but they were of no use, and I was nearly dead when, in August, 1890, I read in the Freeman's Journal, under the heading of 'Syrup,' and thought it might possibly help me. I procured a bottle from the Medical Hall, St. James, and to my surprise after taking it I was much better. Further on are of the Syrup caused the eruption, or rash, to disappear, and my food began to relish. I could soon eat anything. I was completely cured, and was able to go about my usual work. And that Syrup was made known to me, and I am wishing to inform the public of its excellence so other poor sufferers may try it.'

(Signed) William O'Hara, Llanuau, Glamorgan, Glamorgan, Glamorgan, Ireland, June 5th, 1891.

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Mails.

NOTICE.

CO-OPPERIE DES MESSAGERIES MARITIMES. PAQUEBOTS POSTE FRANCAIS.

STRAIT FOR
SINGAPORE, BATAVIA, COLUMBO, PONDICHERRY, MADRAS, CALCUTTA, ADEN, SUKZ, PORT SAID.
MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA PORTS, ALEXANDRIA, JAFFE, SUEZ, AND PORTS OF BRAZIL, AND LA PLATA.

LONDON, HAVRE AND BORDEAUX.

ON WEDNESDAY, the 21st September, 1892, at Noon, the Company's S.S. YANKEE, Commandant SCHMIDT, with MAIL, PASSENGERS, ST. PAUL, and OAKO, will leave this Port for the above places.

Cargo and Goods will be registered for London as well as for Marseilles, and accepted in transit through Marseilles for the principal ports of Europe.

Shipping Orders will be granted till noon.

Cargo will be received on board until 4 p.m. and Parcels until 3 p.m. on the 20th September, 1892. (Parcels are not to be sent on board; they must be left at the Company's Office.)

Contents and value of Packages are registered.

For further particulars, apply at the Company's Office.

U. DE CHAMPEAUX, Agent.

Hongkong, September 7, 1892. 1564

U. S. MAIL LINE.

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

THROUGH TO NEW YORK, VIA OVERLAND RAILWAYS, AND THROUGH TO YOKOHAMA AND SAN FRANCISCO.

PROPOSED SAILINGS FROM HONGKONG.

City of Rio de Janeiro, Thursday, Sept. 22, 1892, at 1 p.m., taking passengers and cargo for Japan, the United States, and Europe.

THE U. S. MAIL STEAMSHIP CO. OF RTO DE JANEIRO will be dispatched for SAN FRANCISCO, via YOKOHAMA, on THURSDAY, the 29th September, at 1 p.m., taking passengers and cargo for Japan, the United States, and Europe.

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